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CENTRAL INTELLIBENCE AGENCY INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

COUNTRY

East Germany

DATE DISTR.

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SUBJECT

Discontent Among Industrial Workers

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3 May 1555

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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LA PROPRIENTED BY LAW THE REPRODUCTION OF THM FORE IS PROGRESTED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. Between 17 and 22 January 1955, there were heated controversies between workers and employees on the one hand and SED factory groups or shop trade union managements on the other in large East Berlin nationalised enterprises. The workers of the Berliner Bremsenwerk (brake plant) and the telecommunication engineering plant openly voiced their discontent over economy measures decreed in the field of social welfare. In connection with these measures, the sums originally earmarked for the improvement of workers' resthouses had been eliminated from factory budgets. The workers reacted most violently when they heard that millions of DME had been handed over by the FDGB to Holf Berger, the president of striking workers IG Letall, who wanted to speak to the workers of the Berliner Bremsen-Werk at the request of its shop trade-union management, was received with prolonged "boos". When the chairman of the shop trade-union management threatened to call the police, the workers and employees left the meeting hall in open protest. Similar incidents occurred at the nationalized "Aktivist" enterprise in Berlin and the "Stalin" Foundry Combine in Fuerstenberg/Oder.

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2. The National Executive Board of the FDGB and the SED Central Committee jointly discussed these incidents, which, according to Herbert Narnke, bore a distinct resemblance to the mood prevailing on 17 June 1953. They did not arrive at a clear-cut decision. The shop trade-union managements were ordered to report all oritical signs of discontent among workers without informing the SSD. This procedure was explained by the fact that the present political situation did not permit rigorous measures against enemies of the régime unless they could be charged with sabotage or espionage activities.

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